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A

POEM,

In BLANK VERSE,

ON A

VIOLENT STORM,

ATTENDED WITH

THUNDER and LIGHTNING.

To which is added,

A POEM on DEATH;

To PALMERA.

By EDWARD STEPHENS.

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Errata.

Page 3, Line 4, for Beams, read beams.
Page 5, Line 20, for Eyes, read eyes.
Page 7, Line 24, for guilds, read gilds.

A

POEM,

In BLANK VERSE, &c.

HOW ſtill all Nature ſeems! a pleaſing Smile
Sits on her roſy Face; the joyous Sun
High mounted on his blazing Carr, around
Unintermitting Beams; to yonder Grove
The ſilent Stream o'erſhadowing, Flocks repair'd
Languiſh beneath the Shade, the grateful Breeze
In-haling; ſtretch'd upon the moſſy Turf
The Shepherd taſtes the viſionary Joy
Of *Phebe* ſmiling, and the Smile returns.
Artleſs, while faithful near his fleecy Charge
The wakeful *Lightfoot* ſits: the ſleepy Gale
Scarce ſighs amid' the Trees: All Nature's huſh'd.
But, ſee! ſlow-riſing from th' Horizon dark
The diſtant Storm appears; with ſable Brow,
And Forms all-hideous to preſaging Fancy,
See! Clouds from Clouds with ſolemn Pace emerge,
Still ſwelling on the Sight; now riſing faſt,
And faſter ſtill, o'er all the Heav'ns they ſpread,
Deep-dark'ning all the Globe; with dreadful Haſte
The ripen'd Tempeſt floats along the Sky;
Now burſts tremendous o'er a guilty World!
Where ſhall I fly, Oh God of Nature! where,
Thy awful Voice? again thy Thunder roars,
How dreadful is the Sound! with ſwift Approach

Loud-bellowing from the ſtormy *South* it comes,
Urg'd by compulſive Winds, with ſolemn Murmur,
Wrapt in the gloomy Clouds——

Now Storms oppoſing, all their Force redouble,
And wage the noiſy War; in awful Rage
The Thunder deep'ning rolls; with forky Fires
The livid Light'ning trembles thro' the Sky,
And lights th' Horizon round; the quiv'ring Flaſh,
Seen ſudden thro' the Gloom, in flaky Wreaths
Now mounts th'emblazon'd Cope of Heav'n; and now
In various Angles ſhoots athwart the Sky;
Now downward piercing with refracted Ray
On That fair Edifice, that long had brav'd
The Rage of Seaſons and the Wreck of Time
Darts ruinous; and There with baleful Blaſt,
The Plain wide deſolates—Oh guard me Heav'n!
The looſen'd Fury of th'outragious Storm
Flames unremitting. Ah, diſtreſsful Sight!
But ill ſecur'd behind yon' ſhatter'd Oak
Shrinks the poor Traveller, and oft to Heav'n
Implores Protection from th'injurious Sky:
The ſuppliant Hands and tearful Eye, in vain
Are rais'd to Heav'n inceſſant; down he falls
Storm-victim'd to the Ground. The ſavage Race
Howl thro' the Woods; while ev'ry gentler Kind
The paſtur'd Herds, and ever-bleating Sheep
Eye Heav'n aſkance, and, wond'ring at the Storm,
Seek Shelter from each other. There the Swain
Cloſe-cottag'd, hears the complicated Rage
Of jarring Elements, and ſees diſmay'd
The Flaſh repeated; while the guiltleſs Screams
Of Infants haſt'ning to his wide-ſtretch'd Arms
Impaſſion all his Soul, and call the Tear
Parental forth: Deep-aw'd, with lifted Eye,
And Nerves convuls'd, the bold, licentious Wretch

Eyes

Eyes the vindictive God with ſteadfaſt Faith
In ev'ry Flaſh, and hears in ev'ry Roar;
And, *Thyrſis* too, (thrice happy thus convinc'd
That one eternal Cauſe ſupports the whole)
I ſee quick-ſhud'ring at the awful Scene;
Deep felt, I ſee th'impreſſive Godhead ſhine
With Force convincing from thy glaring Eyes,
That roll in Anguiſh keen, with vaſt Amaze
Thou ſhiv'ring ſtand'ſt, fearing the miſſive Blaſt,
Unus'd to Fear: how ſhaken all thy Schemes
Of Self-dependance, and a fireleſs World
Self-rais'd, and Self-exiſting! But thy Theme
My devious Muſe reſume. Conflicting Seas
Add Horror to the Scene: for now the Deep
With Agitation fierce, convulſive rears
Her foamy Billows to the bellowing Clouds,
Outragious; lo! a dreadful Chaſm diſcloſes
The ſecret Chambers of the raging Main:
Now the pain'd Sight a thouſand Fathom deep
Quick-piercing, Eyes, long bury'd in her Bed,
The Wreck of human Pride, and Glory loſt.

High on the Summit of yon' riſing Wave
A floating Veſſel rides, and tow'ring ſtill
She gains upon the Skies; when lo! at once
Adown the liquid Precipice ſhe falls
Plung'd deep beneath the Wave: what diſmal Sounds
Of human Woe aſſail my ſtonied Ear,
And ſhudder all my Frame! A thouſand Cries,
And Shrieks ſucceſſive pierce the afflicted Air,
To ſadden the Diſtreſs; the pitying Eye
In vain purſues 'em thro' the breaking Surge,
Still anxious for their Fate; 'till, deep-ingulph'd
Beneath the Storm, they drink the liquid Death.

Oh

Oh Thou! whoſe Voice terrific, or ſerene,
Or bids th'infuriate Waters proudly ſwell,
Or ſink into a Calm; whoſe pow'rful Breath
The wild Winds looſens, and th'obedient Waves
Swells to a Tempeſt; whoſe reſiſtleſs Hand
Graſps the loud Thunder, and the Light'ning points;
Agents of Wrath divine, ah! quick convey 'em
Safe to the Harbour of eternal Reſt:
No furious Tempeſts there, or ſtruggling Winds
Billow the Stream of Life; perpetual Calm
Feaſts with exhauſtleſs Joys th'enraptur'd Breaſt.
And, Oh, eternal Father! Guide Divine!
Me thro' the Storms of ever-ebbing Life
Securely guide; and when my tot'ring Bark,
(As ſoon it muſt,) th'ethereal Ocean tries
Be Faith my Anchor, and my Pilot Thou,
And yon' celeſtial World my happy Shore;
Where Light'nings blaſt not, nor loud Thunders roar.

On DEATH.

To PALMERA.

FROM Man to Man Death ſtalks, unſeen;
And ſhakes his heav'n-commiſſion'd Dart;
Prophetic felt in pale Diſeaſe,
He ſtrikes at every beating Heart.

To-day, ten thouſand vanquiſh'd fell,
E'er *Phœbus* gain'd meridian Sky;
Nor ſhall the Tyrant's Conqueſt ceaſe,
'Till Death himſelf ſhall, conquer'd, die.

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Nature, and all her num'rous Sons,
The brutal and the human Birth,
That gaze the Sky, or tread the Ground,
Muſt mingle with primæval Earth.

The Monarch, Slave, the Cottage Swain,
The Wiſe, Fool, Coward, and the Brave;
Health-blooming Youth, grey, palſy'd Age,
Sleep undiſtinguiſh'd in the Grave.

Clariſſa, and her fav'rite Care *,
Alike the mighty Debt muſt pay;
Beauty's dear Charge muſt once reſign,
All's Darkneſs then, and mould'ring Clay.

See! There the breathleſs Beauty lies,
Forgetful of To-morrow's Schemes:
Alas! her promis'd Joys are fled
To deep Oblivion with her Dreams.

Death, what dire Havock haſt thou made!
Extinct each Beauty's kind'ling Glow;
On that ſad Cheek how droops the Roſe!
Nor gains one ſingle Conqueſt now.

See! how that cold, departing Smile
Sits ſweetly-ſad upon her Cheek:
Yon' ſetting Sun thus leaves the Sky,
And guilds it with the dying Streak.

Faſt-clos'd in everlaſting Sleep,
No longer rolls the beamleſs Eye;
That Tongue, eternal Silence binds,
Nor can one chearing Tale ſupply.

* Her Lap Dog.

Yes, this great Truth *Clariſſa* breaths,
Or ſeems to breath, (burſt heaving Sigh!
Fall thou ſad, ſimpathizing Tear!)
The ſweet *Palmera* too muſt die:

Should Nature firſt thy Breath demand;
Thy Smiles, which nameleſs Raptures give,
Thy ſpotleſs Fame, thy Mem'ry ſweet,
Deep in my Breaſt embalm'd, ſhall live.

And muſt that awful Hour be mine?
Muſt ceaſe this trembling Heart to heave?
My Limbs, pale, motionleſs, and cold,
Ah! muſt they periſh in the Grave?

Forgotten, all that ſweeten'd Life;
The ſocial and the ſtudious Hour;
Nature, with all her Charms, deny'd,
From me deep-hidden, and no more.

Diſſolv'd, each fond, endearing Tye;
Friendſhip's mild Flame forbid to glow;
The Parent's heart-expanded Wish
Extinct, or ineffectual now.

Be then each fleeting Hour employ'd,
To ſmooth my Journey to the Tomb;
And, Oh! be aiding Grace divine
To fit me for the gen'ral Doom!

F I N I S.